



David Sanders, Ph.D.
Director

County of Los Angeles DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

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March 04, 2005

To: Supervisor Gloria Molina, Chair
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From: David Sanders, Ph.D.
Director

JANUARY 4, 2004 BOARD AGENDA ITEM #3 - MOTION BY SUPERVISOR ZEV YAROSLAVSKY re: HOMELESS DISCHARGE PLANNING

On January 4, 2005, the Board directed various county departments, among which was the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), to report back on the current discharge policies and procedures which ensure that persons are discharged to appropriate housing situations and are connected to services as needed; and any barriers to successful implementation of such policies and procedures. The following are the DCFS policies and procedures in place to address the homelessness challenges of DCFS-supervised youth who transition out of foster care.

While the Department's primary priorities include legal permanence, there are youth who require discharge planning. The department's Emancipation Services Division provides support to Children's Social Workers in the development of Transitional Independent Living Plans (TILP) for youth to ensure a smooth transition out of foster care and into adulthood. The TILP is the discharge planning procedure that is used to access emancipation services and resources that will prepare youth to discharge from the Department.

The emancipation services are delivered in a coordinated effort by Transition Coordinators located in each regional DCFS office and in the nine Transition Resources Centers throughout the County of Los Angeles. Emancipation services include but are not limited to Early Start to Emancipation Preparation (ESTEP) services

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for 14- and 15-year-old youth; life skills training classes for 16- to 20-year-old youth; vocational skills classes to prepare youth for trades; job skills services; college preparation and assistance; rental assistance for up to three months; as well as the Transitional Housing Program, with 244 beds for youth who age out of foster care. The Emancipation Services Division maintains a data tracking system to track the number of youth served and the types of services accessed.

Although the above-mentioned discharge planning policies and procedures are in place, DCFS is currently focusing more efforts on assessing each emancipating youth individually to ensure that connections to permanency or emancipation resources are made appropriately in order to ensure that youth do not graduate into homelessness.

For any questions, please feel free to contact me at (213) 351-5600, or your staff may contact Helen Berberian, DCFS Board Liaison at (213) 351-5530.

DS:TP:ms

c: Chief Administrative Officer
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
County Counsel